

Remarks

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 5, 7-11, 13, 15 and 16 are rejected, while claims 4, 6, 12 and 14 are objected to. By this paper, claims 1 and 9 are amended, claims 4 and 12 are canceled, and claims 17-22 are added. Based on the following, consideration of the new and amended claims, and reconsideration of the remaining claims, are requested.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by G8406019.0. The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by EP0461253 (Hashimoto). By this paper, claim 1 is amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. In particular, amended claim 1 contains all of the limitations of claim 4, which accordingly has been canceled. As discussed below, claim 4 was objected to by the Examiner, and therefore, amended claim 1, and each of the claims depending directly or indirectly from it, are believed to be allowable.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashimoto. The Examiner also rejected claims 9-11, 13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over G8406019.0. By this paper, claim 9 is amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. In particular, amended claim 9 includes the limitations of claim 12, which accordingly has been canceled. As discussed below, claim 12 was objected to by the Examiner, and therefore amended claim 9, and each of the claims which depend directly or indirectly from it, are believed to be allowable.

Specification

The Examiner objected to the amended specification submitted with the amendment of 7 July 2005, because the Abstract was not provided on a separate sheet. With this paper, the amended specification is provided with the appropriate indications of textual changes, and is provided on a separate sheet. Applicants respectfully request the objection to the specification to be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claims 4, 6, 12 and 14 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that each would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Original claim 4 depended directly from claim 1 with no intervening claims. By this paper, claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 4. Similarly, original claim 12 depended directly from claim 9, with no intervening claims. By this paper, claim 9 has been amended to include all of the limitations of original claim 12. Therefore, claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-16 are believed to be allowable.

By this paper, claims 17-22 are added. Claim 6, which was objected to by the Examiner, depended from claim 5, which depended from claim 1. By this paper, claim 17 is added, containing limitations of claims 1, 5 and 6. New claim 17 includes the limitation of "a surface modified by a metal treating process," as recited in original claim 5, and further defines the metal treating process as recited in original claim 6. It is worth noting, however, that the reference to "and/or plated with a coating layer," found in original claim 5, is not present in claim 17. This helps avoid ambiguity, though it is expressly understood that claim 17 does not preclude the use of a coating layer. Claim 17, and claims 18 and 19 which depend directly from it, are believed to be allowable.

Claim 14, which was objected to by the Examiner, depended from claim 13, which depended from claim 9. By this paper, claim 20 is added, containing limitations of claims 9, 13 and 14. As in claim 17, new claim 20 includes the limitation of "a surface modified by a metal treating process." This was recited in original claim 13; new claim 20 further defines the metal treating process as recited in original claim 14. It is worth noting, however, that the reference to "and/or plated with a coating layer," found in original claim 13, is not present in claim 20. This helps avoid ambiguity, though it is expressly understood that claim 20 does not preclude the use of a coating layer. Claim 20, and claims 21 and 22 which depend directly from it, are believed to be allowable. Based on the foregoing, allowance of each of the pending claims is requested.

A check in the amount of \$200.00 is enclosed to cover the additional filing fee.. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper to our Deposit Account No. 02-3978.

Respectfully submitted,
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